

Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Data Coordination Efforts in the Southwest and Pacific Islands Regions (Abstract)

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Coordination of HMS data in the SW and PI Regions began in 2002 and is currently a good example of two Regions (Southwest Region, SWR, in Long Beach, CA and Pacific Islands Regional Office, PIRO, in Honolulu, HI) and Science Centers (Southwest Fisheries Science Center, SWFSC, in La Jolla, CA and Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, PIFSC, in Honolulu, HI) working together to standardize collection, processing, archival and dissemination of HMS data. The HMS Data coordination process consists of two Data Coordinators (one in HI and another in CA), a Data Coordination Team (with a member from each Region and Center), and Working Groups (established by the Team when needed). An annual meeting of the HMS staffs is held each year to review progress on issues addressed during the past year and identify new issues and resolutions for the coming year.

The Data Coordination Team and two working groups (Data Catalog and Data Standards) are currently working on resolving 9 issues (data catalog, data submissions, data standards, data confidentiality/security, delinquent data, dispute resolution, ITS access, non-tradition fishery statistics, consistent policies) identified at the 2002 annual meeting. Another 4 issues (tools, data management policies, Selling HMS data coordination, state data sets) were identified in the 2003 annual meeting and will be resolved in 2004.

Progress on resolving the 9 issues identified in 2002 consists of a data catalog listing all of the HMS data sets maintained at the SWFSC, PIFSC, SWR and PIRO. The catalog when completed will contain, for each data set, metadata, publications and reports, submission requirements, and interactive queries of sizes of fish caught, catch time series and geographical plots of fishing effort. The catalog currently resides on a web site <http://swfscdata.nmfs.noaa.gov/>. The site is account number and password protected until it is finished. NMFS employees can gain access by contacting Al.Coan@noaa.gov. The site also contains all of the meeting minutes and the Data Coordination Process documentation, a list of data submissions, and some data management policies that have been developed by the Team.

The Data Standards Working Group has started looking at standards or guidelines to be used when collecting, processing, archiving/managing and disseminating HMS data. Their first effort is to define required and desired data when collecting catch/landings, logbook, observer, vessel specifications, biological sampling, reference codes, conversion factors/methods and fishing permits. The Group will also be looking at standards for metadata, edits/validation, data flow management, electronic data, data quality issues management, delinquent data, archival of original documents.

FIS is assisting in our coordination efforts by investigating standard practices concerning filing of non disclosure statements, application of the three or more rule in release of statistics, offsite access to scientific databases and metadata tools.